



SANTA MONICA BAY RESTORATION COMMISSION

MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE OF THE NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM

SANTA MONICA BAY RESTORATION COMMISSION Draft Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, December 17, 2020

Time: 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Meeting Location: Remote Meeting Only

Dan Pondella chaired the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting of the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission (Commission) and called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m. Commission staff provided an overview of meeting protocols and introductions followed. Guangyu Wang noted participation of Curtis Cash and Stacey Karnya on behalf of Mas Dojiri. Without objection, Dan Pondella accepted staff's recommendation to allow non-TAC members to provide technical expertise and comments during the TAC's discussion of items on the agenda.

1) Comments from Members of the Public on Items Not on the Agenda and Public Testimony on All Agenda Items

Walter Lamb commented on the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve, including the request for discussion of issues related to proposed restoration activities such as greenhouse gas emissions, carbon sequestration, sea level rise projections, and California Rapid Assessment Method (CRAM) scores.

2) General Business

a) Order of Agenda

There was no change to the order of the agenda.

b) Confirmation of TAC Chair and Vice-chair Appointments

Guangyu Wang introduced this item and notified members of the Governing Board's reappointment of the TAC membership at the February 20, 2020 Governing Board meeting. Without objection, the TAC reaffirmed Dan Pondella as the TAC Chair and John Dorsey as TAC Vice-chair.

c) Consideration of Approval of February 5, 2020 Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes were approved as published by roll-call vote. Moved: John Dorsey. Seconded: Eric Stein.

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d) Report from the TAC Chair

Dan Pondella and John Dorsey reported on updates on TAC activities they provided at previous Governing Board meetings, including development of the draft revised Santa Monica Bay NEP Comprehensive Monitoring Program (CMP), and consideration of additional TAC member representation. Dan Pondella also informed members of the completion of construction of the Palos Verdes Reef Restoration Project.

e) Reports from the Chief Administrative Director and Santa Monica Bay National Estuary Program (NEP) Director

Guangyu Wang provided an update on the Proposition 50 grant program and other Commission activities, including approval of the amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding of the Commission, adoption of the TAC's recommendations to encourage implementation of enhanced and standardized monitoring programs for SCWP-funded projects, and scheduling informational items regarding issues of concerns in the watershed.

Tom Ford commented on monitoring for SCWP-funded regional projects, climate resiliency, and historical DDT dumping in Santa Monica Bay. Ford also reported on US EPA NEP funding guidance and Santa Monica Bay NEP activities carried out by The Bay Foundation including kelp forest restoration, eelgrass research and restoration, abalone restoration, the Boater Education Program, and the Table-to-Farm Composting Program. Ford invited Karina Johnston to provide an update on community-based restoration at Ballona Wetlands, Living Shorelines projects, participation in the advisory committee for the Topanga Lagoon Restoration project, and the Loyola Marymount University Coastal Research Institute.

Comments followed on artificial reefs in Santa Monica Bay, updates on US EPA administration, a new NEP in Florida, and the Santa Monica Beach Restoration Pilot Project.

f) Member Comments

Eric Stein commented on the Stormwater Monitoring Coalition's development of a regional monitoring framework for best management practices (BMPs) and completion of a five-year regional watershed monitoring program work plan, development of a statewide estuary monitoring assessment program, and eelgrass monitoring protocols.

Curtis Cash was invited to provide comments on the impacts of trans-Pacific fiber optic cables on the sampling activities of the City of Los Angeles' ocean monitoring program.

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3) Discussion

a) Revision of the Santa Monica Bay NEP Comprehensive Monitoring Program (CMP)

Guangyu Wang invited Karina Johnston to introduce this item. Johnston provided background information on the CMP, updated members on the development of the draft revised CMP, requested input on the draft outline and habitat chapter framework, and outlined next steps.

Discussion followed on data synthesis and compilation; the Quality Assurance Project Plan; AB 1755 requirements; the CMP habitat assessment framework; the importance of habitats for addressing environmental equity and justice concerns and providing ecosystem services; additional habitat stressors including fire, mudslides, and effluent from water recycling facilities.

Member recommendations included incorporating discussion of environmental equity and justice and ecosystem services, including existing metrics and data gaps for valuation of ecosystem services; outlining additional funding needs for each habitat; summarizing priority data gaps and broad funding needs across all habitats; and providing an overview of the processes used for identifying and selecting the monitoring program objectives and habitat indicators.

Members also discussed the approval process for the revised CMP, including the Governing Board's consideration of approval and US EPA's consideration of concurrence. Wang recommended scheduling a TAC meeting to adopt recommendations regarding the final draft revised CMP prior to the Governing Board's consideration of adoption.

b) Consideration of Additional TAC Member Representation

Dan Pondella acknowledged Eric Stein's preliminary suggestions for an environmental toxicology specialist. Guangyu Wang recommended to postpone consideration of additional TAC member representation until after approval of the revised CMP to further inform where additional expertise is needed. Tom Ford suggested future discussions explore options for specialists to provide expertise for select issues.

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

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Attendance:

TAC Members:

Richard Ambrose
John Dorsey (Vice-chair)
Phyllis Grifman
Karen Martin
Dan Pondella (Chair)
Eric Stein

Commission Staff:

Caitlin Gray
Guangyu Wang

Other Attendees:

Amber Bratcher-Covino, LMU Coastal Research Institute
Curtis Cash, LA Sanitation & Environment
Erica Yelensky, US EPA
Grace Chang, Integral Consulting
Karina Alvarez, The Bay Foundation
Karina Johnston, The Bay Foundation
Lindsay Hornsby, MBC Aquatic Sciences
Melodie Grubbs, USC Sea Grant
Stacey Karnya, LA Sanitation & Environment
Tom Ford, The Bay Foundation
Walter Lamb, Ballona Wetlands Land Trust